



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

2012-2013

Annual Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

Each year, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through the preparation of its annual accessibility plans, as required under the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#).

The [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#) is Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

- customer service
- information and communications
- employment
- transportation
- built environment.

This year, the accessibility plans must also address the [Integrated Accessibility Regulation \(IASR\)](#) under the AODA enacted June 2011. The IASR required the OPS to develop a multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP) to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. It published the [OPS MYAP](#) on January 1, 2012. This included a statement of commitment for the OPS to demonstrate leadership for accessibility:

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities.

Building on the OPS Statement of Commitment, the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, and the Ministry's 2011-2012 former Accessibility plan, the new 2012-13 accessibility plan will continue moving the Ministry of Education and the OPS to the goal of demonstrating leadership in becoming an accessible province for all Ontarians.

This plan outlines the specific steps the government is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

To view every ministry's Accessibility Plans, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2011-12

The Government of Ontario is working to achieve the most accessible province by 2025.

Since 2001, the OPS has been complying with the obligations of the ODA and prepared an annual accessibility plan, which it has made available to the public through the Government of Ontario's public website.

During the last ten years, the Ministry of Education has been a leader in accessibility. Some of its memorable moments were:

- In the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years, the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) was provided \$25 million each year to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education and collaboratively with Ontario's school boards to implement a number of the recommendations in [Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6 \(2005\)](#).

The goal was to enhance the capacity of teachers to develop more effective instructional strategies, using the concepts of universal design for learning and differentiated instruction and assessment, as well as assistive technology and augmentative communication to improve the achievement of students with special needs.

- Since 2006, the ministry has continued to support the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) to make the early screening and intervention tool, known as the Web Based Teaching Tool (WBTT), available to additional teachers in more school boards. The expanded use of this tool has resulted in earlier identification of more students' learning difficulties and greater application of instructional strategies and targeted interventions. LDAO will continue to work together with schools for the 2012-13 school year as the WBTT devolves and other resources are created to support students with learning disabilities.

- Through its Provincial and Demonstration Schools, the ministry has adopted very high accessibility standards and is leading by example. The eight schools provide educational services to deaf, blind and deaf-blind students, as well as to students with severe learning disabilities, in both day and residential settings. Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education to prepare students for their future education.

The Provincial and Demonstration Schools have set high standards for accessibility. Some best practices include:

- o accessibility to people using scooters, power wheelchairs, attendants and sign language interpreters;
- o international and universal symbols for accessibility and large font, and other special format materials for information and way finding;
- o evacuation plans to ensure the safe evacuation of people with disabilities, which are reviewed annually;
- o making school resources available in alternate formats at no additional costs, including Braille, digital text, digital audio, analog audio and large print.

In 2011-12, the government continued to comply with the [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation](#). As well, it had begun applying initiatives to meet compliance of some of the requirements of the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#) in the areas of employment, information and communications, transportation and procurement. The government continues to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas such as the built environment.

The following is a summary of the accessibility initiatives the Ministry of Education implemented last year, as a result of the 2011-2012 annual [accessibility plan](#).

Reporting on 2011-2012 AODA obligations

Customer Service

In 2011-12 our ministry...

- Remained in compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
 - o The ministry, through the Corporate Coordination Office, sent email reminders in fall 2012 to staff about the requirement to complete training modules under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- Remained in compliance with the 2011 and 2012 requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
 - o The ministry incorporated accessibility features into procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities by adding a section considering accessibility to the Procurement Request Information Gathering Template.
 - o The Communications Branch has conversion software to create electronic formats of emergency and public safety information upon request. Upon request, the ministry will provide conversion to other accessible formats, working in consultation with the individual making the request.
 - o All current ministry intranet and internet websites were tested and conform to current compliance requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).
- Various feedback channels and methods continue to be available for clients and staff to provide feedback through phone, TTY, fax, e-mail and mail. This also includes the use of surveys and evaluations for internal clients and the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback. Response mechanisms are in place to ensure feedback informs continuous improvement in the way the ministry conducts its business.
- The Learning Environment Branch provided additional information in the new employee orientation binder about mandatory Customer Service training modules, including step-by-step directions on how to access the online modules.

Information and Communications

- The Communications Branch continued to ensure that the ministry's internal intranet and public website are compliant as required by the Integrated Standards Accessibility Regulation (IASR). Tests are being run to ensure website compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA standards (exempting captions (live) and audio descriptions (pre-recorded)).
- [The Ontario Skills Passport](#) (OSP) website was refreshed to align with the internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines in compliance with the AODA and the Accessibility Standard for Information & Communications. This was completed in fall 2012.

Additional work was completed to ensure that the OSP content was prepared in PDF, Word, Power Point and other formats as required in accordance with AODA Guidelines, ODA legislation, OPS Customer Service Policy and OPS MYAP deliverables.

- Ministry publications continued to be posted in HTML, PDF and/or plain text formats on the public website to ensure accessibility.
- The Community Services I & IT Cluster fulfilled its commitment to post relevant ODA resource materials on ClusterNET. Specifically, links to current ODA standards and policies, as well as tools for ODA-compliance were made available for all staff across the five ministries of the cluster.
- The ministry continued to comply with the service disruptions protocol by informing staff where alternate services may be obtained while repairs to existing services are being completed.
- Successful integration into the workplace for persons with disabilities requires a variety of support tools (e.g. software). The Community Services I & IT Cluster of the Learning Ministries continued its commitment to the maintenance and updating as required, of the current list of software and applications, designed to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in day-to-day work activities. This software list remained available to all OPS staff on ClusterNET.

- The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities established a pilot project through [Alternate Education Resources for Ontario](#) (AERO) to enhance the web-based repository which provides accessible format textbooks to colleges and universities to assist them in meeting their legal obligations. The mandate of AERO is to provide alternate format text to students with perceptual disabilities who attend publicly funded educational institutions in Ontario. AERO enables students with perceptual disabilities to access educational materials in a format they require and in a timely manner.

In 2011-12, the Ministries worked with 5 Canadian publishers, 3 colleges and 3 universities to enhance and test the web based repository and recommend improvements. The 2 year pilot project led to significant improvements to AERO's ability to provide high quality accessible format textbooks to students in a timely manner.

- Through the Provincial Schools Branch, the ministry worked collaboratively with Infrastructure Ontario to conduct a business process system audit and expansion feasibility study of the Alternative Education Resources for Ontario (AERO). The learning ministries are currently exploring the potential for implementation

AERO is proceeding with expanding the pilot project to 10 additional postsecondary institutions for 2012 - 13 and plans to have French customer service available for fall 2012.

- The revised curriculum policy documents for Social Sciences and Humanities/Sciences humaines et sociales, Health and Physical Education/Éducation physique et santé, Grades 9-12, Social Studies/Études sociales, Grades 1-6, and History and Geography/Histoire et géographie, Grades 7-8, are in the final stages of editing and finalization.

Preparations for fall consultations on the Health strand of the Health and Physical Education/Éducation physique et santé (Grades 1-8) curricula are on-going.

- Professional development commitments for teachers were provided on a wide range of topics and through a diverse set of delivery methods (Adobe Connect, webinars and face-to-face format).

Funding was allocated to the 12 French-language school boards to support ongoing teacher training in differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction allows teachers

to respond to varying student needs, including students with disabilities, by providing a balance of different instructional strategies.

- The implementation of e-Learning policies and programs includes considerations for students with special needs.

All learning objects created by [e-Learning Ontario](#) (eLO) in 2011-12 contain written text and audio.

To expand accessibility to mathematical equations in online courses, screen readers have the capability to read equation formats.

- The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) is in the process of developing the Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (working title) resource guide. The draft document is currently being edited.
- [Growing Success](#), the guidelines for assessment, evaluation and reporting, mandates in the fundamental principles and policies to support the needs of all students, including those with special education needs. Efforts to make Growing Success resources more accessible have included:
 - o Posted transcripts of existing video resources posted on the resource site.
 - o Accessible professional development materials (e.g., PowerPoint presentations) from learning sessions being prepared.
 - o Multiple formats of professional learning materials are available, including synchronous e-learning sessions, and posted recorded sessions for greater accessibility.
 - o A new set of instructional modules on Growing Success policy are posted on the resource site. All text has both voice and close-captioning capability.

Employment

- The Community Services I&IT Cluster continued to promote collaboration tools (e.g. SharePoint and WebCenter) that provide interactive, accessible Web 2.0 features for all employees.
- Hosted by the Diversity Office, the fifth Accessibility Expo took place on Thursday, December 1, 2011 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. This annual event provides information on accessibility best practices and available technology to

accommodate persons with disabilities. Employees from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities attended the event.

- The Learning Ministries hosted a Diversity Showcase on May 30, 2012 to highlight ways in which both ministries integrate diversity and inclusion into the day-to-day work of the divisions. The showcase had displays from every division and included information on the Accessibility@Source campaign.
- The Provincial Schools Branch provided job-embedded training in American Sign Language (ASL) and ASL instruction for staff in Summer 2012.

Ernest C. Drury (ECD) School for the Deaf Campus had a one week immersion of ASL skill enhancement offered to staff in partnership with the Canadian Hearing Society.

Given the success of last year's experience at ECD, the Centre Jules-Léger (CJL) Campus, the Province's only French Provincial School for the Deaf, is looking to repeat the job-embedded training in la langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) in 2012.

Built Environment

- The campus way-finding signage design has been completed. Barrier-free design standards are considered and incorporated into all capital projects for the provincial schools.
- At the Belleville campus:
 - o A new accessible playground has been installed and accessibility improvements have been made in the main school and the teacher education residence.
 - o The main school barrier-free washroom renovation has been completed.
 - o Six accessible door operators were installed at various entrances.
 - o The design for barrier-free sports building washrooms and change rooms was completed. Construction is pending available budget.
- At the Brantford campus:
 - o The design is complete for a new barrier-free residence.
 - o Six accessible door operators were installed at various entrances.

- At the Milton campus:
 - o A feasibility study for a new integrated mass notification system that provides a universal design for all provincial schools sites and takes into account the needs of students and staff with disabilities has been completed. Construction is expected to begin June 2012, with completion in 2012-13.
 - o New accessible ramps to the cafeteria and sports building have been installed at the Milton campus.
 - o Design completed for barrier-free Milton pool and change rooms. Project initiation pending available budget.
 - o The design and construction of barrier-free washroom renovations of two dorms was completed.
 - o The barrier-free design of two secondary school washrooms was completed. Construction is pending available budget.
- At the Ottawa campus:
 - o The barrier-free life skills classroom design and construction was completed.
 - o Way-finding signage for the interior and exterior is now complete.
 - o Barrier-free washrooms and emergency alarm system are complete in the student washrooms.
 - o All fire doors have been upgraded to current standards for easier access from one segment of the building to the other.
 - o Installation of a more visible red strobe light in the cafeteria.
 - o The Emergency Broadcast System (MNS) has been expanded to include a visual notification automatically sent through Blackberries and individual pagers assigned to staff who are deaf.
- The kitchen on the 15th floor of Mowat Block in Toronto was renovated to include a wheel-chair accessible sink.

Procurement

- The Learning Ministries continued its commitment to OPS procurement guidelines to ensure that accessibility has been considered in the procurement of goods and services. The ODA Procurement Requirements Checklist is a formal part of the procurement process.

Other

Applied Behaviour Analysis

- As required by [Policy Program Memorandum \(PPM\) 140](#), the ministry has developed and implemented an annual process to monitor implementation of PPM 140 by school boards. The purpose of PPM 140 is to provide direction to school boards to support their use of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) as an effective instructional approach in the education of many students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). In spring 2012, the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) surveyed all school boards regarding their compliance with requirements set out in PPM 140 and boards' ability to support ABA instructional methods, and identify further needs of school boards to build ABA capacity. Key findings of the survey were shared with the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education.
- The capacity of school boards in ABA has been strengthened. ABA uses methods of learning and behaviour to develop positive behaviours and reduce problematic behaviours to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. ABA expertise funding is part of the Grants for Students Needs as the Behaviour Expertise Amount. All school boards are to hire at least one applied behaviour analysis expertise professional. The total amount allocated in 2011-12 is \$11.3M.

The ministry hosted a Behaviour Expertise Professional Learning Day for special education senior administrators and one ABA expert from all 72 school boards in Ontario on March 1, 2012.

- Effective practices developed by school boards for supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are posted and regularly updated on the [Council of Ontario Directors of Education](#) (CODE) website and are accessible to educators, parents and other professionals.

During the Summer of 2012, the Geneva Centre for Autism conducted educator training through the Annual Geneva Centre for Autism Summer Training Institute. The 2012 Summer Training Institute focused on the use of ABA as an effective instructional approach in the education of many students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA)

- The Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Implementation, Innovation and Support Branch continued to support boards through the use and development of the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA).

Regional teams consisting of Education Officers, representatives from Student Success, Literacy/Numeracy Secretariat, Field Services and Special Education met with boards to support with their planning, implementation and monitoring process. Feedback has been gathered from two board visits by regional teams during the 2011-12 school year. The feedback from these sessions has been instrumental in informing further development and implementation strategies for the BIPSA.

Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) steering committee meetings happen on a monthly basis and are hosted at the ministry. At these meetings, future BIPSA planning is discussed, and includes the participation and feedback of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch. (ongoing)

- Ministry teams continued to meet with school boards in 2011-12 to support them through the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) process. Every ministry team includes a special education representative.
- The French-Language Policy and Programs Branch provided required support to the 12 French-language school boards to meet their board improvement plan targets for students with special education needs.

SEPPB worked with other branches and divisions in the ministry to ensure that the Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement (BIPSA) content and process reflects an explicit focus on students with special needs, closing the gaps for specific student populations, such as ELL, Aboriginal and students with special needs, and that there is collaboration at all levels of the system to support all learners.

Early Learning and Full Day Kindergarten

- The government has committed to modernizing child care in the province. As a first step in the modernization process, the Early Learning Division (ELD) released a discussion paper [Modernizing Child Care in Ontario – Sharing Conversations, Strengthening Partnerships, Working Together](#). A guiding principle of the paper is a commitment to quality programs for all children of all abilities. The Early Learning Division is utilizing the discussion paper as a way to hold a conversation and public

consultation concerning the modernization of child care in the medium-term (i.e., over the next three years). This consultation includes discussions with service providers for children with special needs/special education needs scheduled for September 2012. This consultation extends the work of the Special Needs/Special Education Needs Reference Group.

Parents of children with special needs/special education needs were invited to respond to the discussion paper through public registry until September 24th 2012, recognizing that there may be the need for ongoing discussions post-closure.

The discussion paper will be provided in accessible format(s), upon request.

- The Early Learning Division distributed a memorandum to all regional Early Learning and Quality Assurance Licensing Offices which provided an overview of the AODA standards, a link to the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) AODA website and MCSS contact information.

The memorandum to the licensing offices also stated that child care operators should familiarize themselves with other requirements under the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

- The Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) Special Needs/Special Education Needs Inter-ministerial Working Group continued to meet and work together on issues that span the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Meetings were held on a quarterly basis and co-chaired by the Early Learning & Child Care Program and Evaluation Unit and the Special Education Policy and Program Branch

- The second year of data collection for the evaluation of FDK was concluded in spring 2012. Part of this work considered the impact of FDK for students with special needs/special education needs and their families.

Parents of kindergarten students were invited to participate in parent focus groups at 16 case study sites. Some of these parents included those with children with special needs/special education needs.

Organizations that serve children with special needs/special education needs and their families were invited to participate as community partners in the FDK evaluation.

The final report from the external evaluators was due on October 31, 2012. Policy development related to full-day kindergarten and child care is guided by the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. All policy memoranda and legislative / regulatory amendments consider the needs of children with special needs and their families in licensed child care settings.

Equity and Inclusive Education

- [Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education \(EIE\) Strategy](#) supports an inclusive school climate where all members of the school community are to be welcomed and respected and every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning. Recognizing that some students, such as students with special education needs, may be at risk of lower achievement, the strategy provides a framework to support the education community to identify and address discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to support student achievement and well-being. During 2011 – 12, the ministry continued to:
 - o support school boards and schools in embedding the principles of Equity and Inclusive Education into all operations and learning environments.
 - o support the operation and funding of seven EIE networks to support school board implementation of the [Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](#) and [Parent Engagement Policy](#).
 - o embed the principles of EIE into other ministry initiatives, including the Ontario Leadership Strategy, Accepting Schools Act, and updating of reading/writing/math resources for parents.
 - o review curriculum documents from an EIE perspective. The ministry also reviewed and provided input into Ontario College of Teachers' courses.
 - o support partners to develop resources that address the needs of persons with disabilities (e.g. closed captioning of video resources).
- The ministry led and supported presentations, workshops, training sessions and consultations for Ministry of Education stakeholders (e.g. parent conferences, Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, teacher candidates) and the broader sector (e.g. police cadets) on the EIE strategy.

- The ministry provided funding to diverse equity, parent and community stakeholders to support implementation of the EIE Strategy, including parent engagement. Projects included the development of print and online resources, e-learning modules, webinars, conferences, workshops and training sessions for students, school staff, teachers, school and system leaders, and parents.
- The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) is an active supporter of the EIE Strategy and provides training to school boards on anti-racism, disability and other EIE-related issues. The OHRC closed its 2007 Settlement resulting from its complaint about the impact of discipline policies on racialized and disabled students. In its letter to the Minister of Education, the OHRC noted that the ministry met, and in some cases exceeded, all of the terms of the Settlement.

Learning for All

- Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Policy Branch and French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch released [Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements](#) which sets out the policies and programs, including diploma requirements, for all publicly funded elementary and secondary schools in Ontario. The document was released the ministry's website in December 2011 and published it in April 2012.

This document includes:

- o Safe Schools policy
- o Equity and Inclusive Education policy
- o policy for students deemed to be at risk
- o policy requirements for students with special education needs
- o provincial and demonstration schools policy
- o program requirements for students in care and/or treatment, custody, and correctional facilities
- o granting requirement of the Certificate of Accomplishment
- o procedures for students who fail to meet course expectations and a
- o policy on the Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement regarding accommodations, deferrals and exemptions.

The document was provided to schools and school boards and posted on the EDU website. Students with special education needs were taken into account during the revision/updating of provincial policies governing special education programs and services.

The ministry has provided funds to all school boards to support their use of *Learning for All, K-12* (Draft 2011) in the 2011-12 and 2012-13 years. Eighteen lead school boards have received additional funds to coordinate regional professional development and sustain knowledge mobilization.

Training on the Ontario Schools document was included in six regional planning sessions for school board and school representatives in spring 2012.

[Learning for All K-12 2010-11 Regional Project Reports](#) are posted on the ministry website as supporting resources to the draft document. These reports outline the professional learning activities that took place in school boards across the province in 2010-11, highlight effective practices and resources developed during this period.

A [Learning for All K-12 Provincial e-Community](#) was created to facilitate professional learning at the provincial level and sharing of resources.

Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

- The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) continued to work in partnership with school boards to raise overall achievement results of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and close achievement gaps. LNS works directly with schools and boards to identify challenges and develop solutions. Examples of LNS work with boards and schools include:
 - o working with boards to develop goals and action plans for improving student learning and achievement;
 - o sharing research on evidence-informed teaching and learning practices;
 - o supporting systematic professional learning for teachers and administrators.

Minster's Advisory Council on Special Education

- The [Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education](#) (MACSE) provided advice and recommendations related to the priorities of mental health and transitions throughout the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Final advice and recommendations will be included in MACSE's 2011-2012 Annual report.

The French-Language Policy and Programs Branch collaborated with the SEPPB and the Curriculum and Assessment Branch to provide support as required to the 12 French-language school boards, based on MACSE feedback.

Parent Engagement

- The Parent Engagement Office led the [Parents Reaching Out \(PRO\) grants](#) program – an initiative that supports parents in identifying barriers to parent engagement in their own community and finding local solutions to help more parents get involved. Grants were available and provided to non-profit organizations and school councils to assist all parents, including parents of children with disabilities, to support their children's learning and at school.
- The Parent Engagement Office led a provincial symposium in April 2012 for Parent Involvement Committees that included diverse representation from parents, school councils and the provincial schools, and addressed the needs of parents with disabilities (e.g. interpreters for the hearing impaired).

Other

- The Instruction and Leadership Development Division participated on the OPS Diversity Steering Committee to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers as well as identify and meet employee needs.
- The Leadership Development Branch (LDB) ensured that the revised Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) 2012, which models skills, knowledge and attitudes, reflected inclusionary policies and awareness related to persons with disabilities.

LDB also engaged with SEPPB to ensure alignment with leadership policies and programs.

Provincial Schools

- The Provincial Schools Branch (PSB) has submitted the Grade 11 locally developed course, Enhancing the Understanding of ASL, for approval for implementation by February 2013.
- PSB submitted the Grade 10 American Sign Language (ASL) curriculum to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch and approval was given for the Grade 10 ASL curriculum as a locally developed credit course.

- The Langue des Signes Québécoise (LSQ) curriculum was completed for both the elementary and secondary levels. The content for the elementary level is currently being tested.

Discussions with French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch have been held in order to reconcile the LSQ curriculum with the French curriculum in terms of the reading and writing components of both curricula. Recognition of the LSQ curriculum as an international language curriculum is part of that discussion.

Approval to use the LSQ curriculum as a locally developed course for Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 has been granted by the ministry to school boards and Centre Jules-Léger. This LSQ curriculum has been approved until August 2016.

- The ministry, through the PSB, held workshops through the year for staff, students and parents.
- The follow-up process on the [Banque de ressources éducatives de l'Ontario](#) (BRÉO) (Ontario Educational Resource Bank) has started and is in the planning stages. The process is to include assessment of BRÉO resources to validate accessibility for Deaf students.

Training on accessing and using the resources available in BRÉO has been provided to teachers at Centre Jules-Léger along with Télévision en français l'Ontario (TFO), resources. Follow-up training has been planned with both BRÉO and TFO consultants.

- In the provincial schools, Google Docs on iPads has improved the accessibility to technology for blind students and assisted them in the use of word processing and website design.
- The ministry, through the Provincial Schools Branch's Centre Jules-Léger (CJL), has developed with the University of Ottawa an on-line course for Part 1 of the French-language Additional Qualification (AQ) course, Teaching Students Who are Blind. The course is currently being promoted and is open for registration for the 2012 fall session, which began September 2012.
 - o Twenty teachers from French School Boards took the course "Teaching for the Blind".

- o CJL worked in collaboration with the University of Ottawa to obtain the agreement to teach the AQ course from the Ontario College of Teachers.
- o CJL had five student teacher placements for the 2011-12 school year.
- o The Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students Who are Blind or Have Low Vision are resources for district school boards to support students with these exceptionalities.
- o Electronic release of the guidelines is pending.

Safe Schools and Bill 13

- [Bill 13](#) (Accepting Schools Act) was passed by the Ontario legislature in June 2012. The bill creates legal obligations for school boards to create safe, inclusive and accepting schools and to take measures to prevent and address bullying based on a range of factors, including persons with disabilities. The bill also requires boards to support students who want to lead activities that promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, the acceptance of and respect for others and the creation of a positive school climate. This may include activities that promote awareness, understanding and respect for people with disabilities. The Bill also makes it a legal requirement for all boards to have an equity and inclusive education policy in place.
- SEPPB continued to collaborate with the Learning Environment Branch to support the implementation of the [Safe Schools Strategy](#).
- The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) worked collaboratively with the Learning Environment Branch (LEB) and the Inclusive Education Branch (IEB) in partnership with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) to develop a resource for school leaders to support a bias-free approach to student discipline.

Secondary Education

- In March-May 2012, ministry consultations on a new career and guidance education policy (revised *Choices into Action*) were undertaken with external groups including the Ontario School Counsellors Association, subject associations, Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA), and the Student Achievement Working Table.

At its June meeting, the Ministers Advisory Committee on Special Education (MACSE) was given a presentation on the 34 credit threshold for secondary school graduation and supports for students with disabilities, effective September 2013.

- In June 2011, the ministry requested expressions of interest by boards wishing to participate in pilots to track and record skills development of students in Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL), particularly those students engaged in non-credit activities.

Five boards participated in pilots in the 2011-12 school year. They created sample templates and processes to track the progress of students in SAL, particularly in non-academic portions of the program. In some cases, the students involved were dealing with mental health and/or behavioural issues.

In April 2012, EDU hosted a SAL symposium for teams from each school board to share ideas and practices identified in the pilots.

- Staff from the Student Achievement Division visited each of the 16 Regional Planning Teams responsible for planning and delivering Dual Credit programs twice during 2011-12 (Winter 2011 and Spring 2012.) During these visits, SMART goals and data reporting were discussed in order to refine data collection and conduct deeper analysis to ensure that dual credit programs remained focused on the needs of the primary target group, which includes students who are disengaged and/or underachieving.
- Ministry staff ran sessions at the annual School-College Work Initiative (SCWI) Symposium in May 2012 on data collection and on School Within a College (SWAC) programs in order to encourage deeper implementation of ministry policy, improve data collection practices, and focus on the target group of students.

Specialist High Skills Majors

- Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) let students focus on a career path that matches their skills and interests while meeting the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Students receive the SHSM's seal on their diploma when they:
 - o complete a specific bundle of 8-10 courses in the student's selected field
 - o earn valuable industry certifications including first aid and CPR qualifications
 - o gain important skills on the job with employers.

There are now a total of over 1,300 SHSM programs in over 630 schools in all school boards. Over 300 new SHSM programs were offered in 2011-12.

As part of the SHSM implementation plan, boards and schools are required to consider accommodations and/or modifications for students with special education needs [students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)], including appropriate supports and preparation for students participating in experiential learning work placements.

Analysis of data from 2011-12 board level SHSM reports indicate that approximately 20% of students enrolled in French-language SHSM programs had an IEP.

SEPPB continues to monitor the SHSM initiative led by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Branch.

- Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs have expanded for the 2012-13 school year to over 670 schools in all school boards. Over 150 new programs have been approved to be offered in 2012-13.

The SHSM will be offered in nineteen economic sectors, which includes the expansion to a new sector – Food Processing in 2012-13.

Board and OnSIS data shows that 24% of SHSM students are students with Individual Education Plans (IEP). This shows that there is a higher proportion of students with IEP's in the SHSM when compared to the general secondary school population. The ministry will conduct a more detailed analysis to determine participation and success of students with IEPs in the SHSM. Data to be used for analysis includes board level SHSM reports and OnSIS data.

Over 3,000 students of French-language schools will participate in SHSM programs in sixteen sectors.

Ministry SHSM staff organized and presented 24 SHSM workshops across the province to support deeper implementation of ministry policy, greater awareness of SHSM data, and improved data collection practices. Over 1,000 teachers and administrators attended these workshops.

Special Education Policy and Programs Branch

- The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) developed draft provincial guidelines and funded regional projects in boards to enhance assessment processes, methods and reporting for students with special education needs who do not access the Ontario curriculum and do not participate in EQAO assessments

The project is now entering its next phase as SEPPB met with representatives to further develop the guidelines with a focus on data collection and monitoring.

- SEPPB supported the development of a resource guide to support classroom teachers, English Language Learners (ELL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and special education teachers through review of current school board protocols and the CODE research projects.

The [Canadian Council on Learning](#) used research to inform decisions on the Special Education resources.

Examples:

- o Canadian Council on Learning completed a comprehensive literature review to support the development of this resource document.
 - o OISE research on Steps to English Proficiency (STEP) evaluating the stability of the STEP assessment continua scales
 - o School board needs related to supporting ELL with special education needs gathered through the *English Language Learners Policy and Program Implementation Projects*.
- SEPPB continues to work with the Student Success/Learning to 18 Branch to ensure its initiatives support the diversity of all students in Ontario schools, including those with special education needs.

Funding was provided in the 2011-12 school year to provide the required assistance for facilitating the participation of students with special education needs in cooperative education and dual credit programs.

Web Based Teaching Tool

- The Web Based Teaching Tool (WBTT) is a bilingual, universal, online program for the early screening and intervention of learning disabilities. WBTT is funded by the Ministry of Education and is available free of charge to public and Catholic school boards across Ontario.

The ministry continued to use the WBTT in the 2011-12 year. The [Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario](#) (LDAO) will continue to work together with schools for the 2012-13 school year as the WBTT devolves and other resources are created to support students with learning disabilities.

LDAO launched WBTT on [Facebook](#) in both English and French languages to share inspirational articles, links and quotes related to early learning, screening and interventions. LDAO will also post information about relevant upcoming events or other news that may be of interest to educators, parents, researchers, and those who are interested in education.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2012-13 and Beyond

Our Statement of Commitment:

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities.

This year, the Ministry of Education accessibility plan focuses on six areas. In order to demonstrate leadership in accessibility, our ministry is planning to undertake the activities described below. At a minimum, these initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards under the AODA and other areas.

- Customer Service
- Information & Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment
- Procurement
- Accessibility Training
- Other

Customer Service

The Ministry of Education is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive accessible goods and services from us. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

- The ministry will continue to be in compliance with the Customer Service Standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and will communicate and/or update the staff intranet with applicable information as needed (ongoing).
- The ministry will continue to promote Ontario Public Service (OPS) training modules and communicate training requirements to new employees to ensure that staff are trained as required under the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

Information and Communications

The Ministry of Education is committed to making government information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide how we communicate it are key to delivering our programs and services to the public.

- The Communications Branch will continue to ensure that the ministry's intranet and public website are compliant with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) (ongoing).
- Ministry publications will continue to be posted in HTML, Portable Document Format (PDF) and/or plain text formats on the websites to ensure accessibility (ongoing).
- The Community Services I & IT Cluster will continue to expand the accessibility resource area of ClusterNET and conduct yearly reviews to ensure accuracy of content including ODA standards, policies, videos and tools for ODA support and compliance.
- The Community Services I & IT Cluster of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to maintain and update, as required, the current list of software and applications, designed to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in day-to-day work activities.
- The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) will continue to develop the Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (working title) resource document and consult with key stakeholder groups when the draft becomes available.
- The Provincial Schools Branch (PSB) will continue to explore possibilities for creating alternate format materials for ministry employees and other applications.
- PSB will be piloting a project to allow staff at Ernest C. Drury to use Skype to enable them to communicate with each other using ASL.
- The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch (CAPB) will plan professional learning sessions, taking into consideration workplace functionality for participants who require accessibility services.

CAPB will meet this commitment by:

- o Ensuring all meeting venues are accessible for persons with mobility disabilities (e.g., availability of ramps, elevators, accessible washrooms).
 - o Providing accessibility supports (e.g., ASL interpreters, large print, captioning) to persons who require such services.
 - o Providing PowerPoint presentations in accessible formats and producing PowerPoint presentations in accessible ways (e.g. Use of large fonts, easy-to-read colour schemes).
- CAPB will continue to support accessible communications materials to ensure information is readable by the widest range of people.

CAPB email attachments will be accessible by providing alternative formats (e.g., PDF, Word) and/or providing links to web pages that have online versions of the documents.

- CAPB will support accessible policy and resource materials to ensure information is readable by the widest range of people. Policy and resource documents will be provided in an accessible digital format.

CAPB will also ensure all policy documents (e.g., curriculum, assessment and reporting) and resource (e.g., International Languages, Steps for English Proficiency) are accessible by providing alternative formats (e.g., PDF, Word) and/or provide links to web pages that have online versions of the documents.

- CAPB will provide online information in an accessible manner by ensuring that content conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards (exempt Captions (Live) and Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded)).

Accessibility needs will be addressed on web-based learning systems by ensuring that content procedures conform to WCAG standards as required under the IASR.

CAPB will develop a plan to ensure all domains on EduGAINS integrate accessibility into the resources they post.

For example, this may include:

- o Posting transcripts of existing video resources on resource site.
- o Making professional learning materials from learning sessions accessible (e.g., PowerPoint presentations)

- o Providing multiple formats of professional learning materials, including synchronous e-learning sessions, and recorded sessions for greater accessibility.
 - o Providing text with both voice and close-captioning capability.
 - o Expanding accessibility to mathematical equations in online courses with screen readers that have the capability to read equation formats.
- The newly refreshed Ontario Skills Passport (OSP) website will be launched in winter 2012 and will be monitored by the Student Achievement Division (SAD) for continued compliance with the AODA.

More refinements will be implemented in Phase II of the project to ensure better, use-friendly features.

- Curricula will continue to be revised. Learning expectations and examples will address the teaching and learning needs of all learners, including students with special education needs.

The following curricula was released in fall 2012:

- o Social Sciences and Humanities/Sciences humaines et sociales curricula (Grades 9-12)
- o Health and Physical Education/Éducation physique et santé curricula (Grades 9-12)

The following curricula will be released in winter 2013:

- o Health and Physical Education/Éducation physique et santé (Grades 1-8) curricula
 - o Social Studies/Études sociales (Grades 1-6) and History and Geography/Histoire et géographie curricula (Grades 7-8)
 - o Anglais pour débutants curricula (Grades 4-8 and Grades 9-12)
- [Growing Success](#), the guidelines for assessment, evaluation and reporting, mandates in the fundamental principles and policies to support the needs of all students, including those with special education needs. Efforts will continue to make Growing Success resources more accessible.
 - The French Language, Aboriginal Education and Research Division will continue to use the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA (exempt Captions (Live) and Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded)) as a standard for the development of all new digital resources.

Employment

The Ministry of Education is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities. People with disabilities who are OPS employees know they can participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

- The Community Services I&T Cluster will continue to seek out and recommend products that offer Web 2.0 features. CSC will ensure that these products meet or exceed guidelines under the ODA.
- The Provincial Schools Branch (PSB) will continue to provide job-embedded coaching in American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des Signes Québécoise (LSQ) and support opportunities for ASL and LSQ instruction for staff.
- The Diversity Mentoring Partnership Program (DMPP) is a formal reciprocal mentorship program developed as a key initiative of the 2008 OPS Diversity Three-Year Strategic Plan.

The program is designed to provide an inclusive environment for reciprocal learning in which mentors and employee partners engage in honest, open and meaningful dialogue about diversity, accessibility and inclusion. Partnerships are between deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, directors and managers as mentors, and staff from the five groups currently under-represented in senior management: Aboriginals; Francophones; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) employees; persons with disabilities; and visible minorities.

For 2012-13, 84 employees from the learning ministries are participating in the mentorship program.

Built Environment

The Ministry of Education is committed to greater accessibility in, out of and around the buildings we use.

- The Provincial Schools Branch (PSB) will continue to work with the Infrastructure Ontario and the ministry's facilities unit to improve accessibility of the built environment and comply with barrier-free design standards (ongoing).

The PSB will complete construction on the new integrated mass notification system (MNS) for the ECD campus.

The MNS will provide emergency notification to all staff and students simultaneously in a variety of methods including:

- o ASL video
 - o Different coloured lights to indicate different circumstances
 - o Flashing lights
 - o Text messages
 - o Voice announcements
- The PSB will complete the construction of the new barrier-free residence in Brantford for students who are blind or have low vision. Design elements will include:
 - o An all-weather internal, accessible connection for the students from the new residence to the school.
 - o Strong, simple patterning to create a landscape that is comfortable and safe to understand and navigate.
 - o Walkways are designed as straight lines between intersections or building entrances delineated by textured paving; tactile materials that warn of a change of direction.
- The Instruction and Leadership Development Division will renovate the women's washroom on the 15th floor of Mowat Block in Toronto to include a wheel-chair accessible stall.

Procurement

The Ministry of Education is committed to integrating accessibility considerations into our procurement processes. We ask potential suppliers to tell us about the accessible options they offer. We include accessibility considerations in our evaluation criteria.

- The ministry will continue to follow the ODA directive and checklist for procurement of accessible goods and services.
- Potential vendors will continue to be asked to provide accessible options in their responses to Request for Services/Request for Proposals. Accessibility considerations will continue to be part of the evaluation criteria to determine successful vendors.

- The Community Services I & IT Cluster will continue its commitment to update and apply the ODA Procurement Requirements Checklist in developing business solutions.

Accessibility Training

- CAPB will continue to keep staff informed about ODA and AODA requirements and incorporate the requirements into their work and learning. CAPB will:
 - o continue to meet ODA requirements by providing opportunities to learn about ODA and AODA requirements to staff (e.g., CAPB Learning Days).
 - o provide managers with an overview of the commitments on the ODA Accessibility Plan 2012 – 2013 and develop branch strategies to meet the commitments.

Other

Applied Behaviour Analysis

- The Connections for Students model is centered on multi-disciplinary, student-specific, school-based transition teams, which are established approximately six months before a child prepares to transition from the Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) services. The IBI services are provided through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services funded Autism Intervention Program to Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) instructional methods in school.

To support this commitment in the coming year, the ministry will:

- o Establish an e-Learning community for Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) expertise professional. It will allow for the sharing of effective practices among ABA expertise professionals across the province.
- o Host a Behaviour Expertise Professional Learning Day in Spring 2013 to provide board level ABA staff with an opportunity to share and develop effective practices that support students with special education needs, including students with ASD.
- o Collaborate with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to collect relevant data and information to support the development of a long term provincial ASD surveillance tool for Ontario.

Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement

- Ministry teams will continue to meet with school boards in 2012-13 to support them through the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) process.
- Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) steering committee meetings will continue to occur in 2012-13 with Special Education participation.

Early Learning and Full Day Kindergarten

- As part of the commitment to modernize child care in the province, submissions generated in response to the discussion paper, [Modernizing Child Care in Ontario – Sharing Conversations, Strengthening Partnerships, Working Together](#), will be compiled and analyzed. It is anticipated that some submissions will be focused on modernizing the language and understanding of children with special needs in child care settings. Future action will be generated from the consultation process.
- Information gleaned from the second year of data collection for the evaluation of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) will be used to improve effective practices moving forward to full implementation of FDK in 2014.

The experience of FDK for students with special needs/special education needs will continue to be monitored as part of a continuous monitoring process.

- The Early Learning Division policy development will continue to be guided by the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. All policy memoranda and legislative / regulatory amendments consider the needs of children with special needs and their families in licensed child care settings.
- ELD will continue to update and support regional licensing offices on any requirements set out in the AODA and its standards, which, in turn, will support licensed child care operators throughout the province.

Equity and Inclusive Education

- The Inclusive Education Branch (IEB) will continue to support school boards and schools in embedding the principles of Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE) into all operations and learning environments.

- IEB will continue to support the operation and funding of EIE Implementation Networks to support school boards' implementation of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy.
- The ministry, through the IEB, will continue to provide funding to diverse equity, parent and community stakeholders to support implementation of the EIE Strategy, including parent engagement.
- IEB will continue to work with ministry partners and the OHRC on a resource for school leaders to support a bias free approach to student discipline.

French-Language

- The French Language Education Policy and Programs Branch (FLEPPB) will continue to work closely with the 12 French-language school boards to provide required support to meet their board improvement plan targets for students with special education needs.
- FLEPPB in partnership with Centre Jules-Léger (CJL) has launched a working group whose mandate is to rewrite and adapt the existing drafted Langue des Signes Québécoise (LSQ) curriculum and bring it to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch's standards. The planning for writing an approved provincial LSQ curriculum will begin in fall 2012.

FLEPPB and CJL will create tools and documents which will support the teaching of French and Mathematics in LSQ. These supporting documents will facilitate the teaching of those two subject matters by our Deaf staff.

Learning for All

- The ministry will continue to support school boards in their use of the [Learning for All K-12](#) document through regional professional learning and the Learning for All K-12 Provincial Network Team.

The ministry will continue to collect feedback and consult with key stakeholder groups to finalize the document in 2013.

Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

- The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) continues to work in partnership with school boards to raise the achievement results overall and close achievement gaps.

Ongoing work with school boards includes the following initiatives: Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership (OFIP): Schools in the Middle, Early Primary Collaborative Inquiry, Collaborative Inquiry for Learning – Mathematics and Student Work Study Teachers (SWST) and Student Work Sample Study. One component of these initiatives is the focus on differentiated instruction and meeting the needs of students with special education needs.

LNS's initiatives include a focus on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of students with special education needs (Ongoing).

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

- For the 2012-13 fiscal year, the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) has identified new priorities related to accountability and student achievement, and the impact of Bill 13: The Accepting Schools Act, 2012 on students with special education needs.

The French-Language Policy and Programs Branch will continue to collaborate with Special Education Policy and Programs Branch as well as with Curriculum and Assessment Branch by providing support as required to the 12 French-language school boards, based on MACSE feedback.

Parent Engagement

- The ministry will continue to support the implementation of the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants initiative.

Provincial Schools Branch

- Centre Jules-Léger (CJL) has been assigned a total of 20 hours of training by staff from E-Learning (French section).

The training will cover how to make better use the resources available and their adaptability to special needs of the students and staff.

- The Provincial Schools Branch (PSB) will continue to work on the development of the Grade 11 American Sign Language (ASL) curriculum.
- The ministry, through the PSB and FLEPPB, will partner with postsecondary institutions to increase the supply of specialist teachers of the Deaf, the Blind, and the Deaf-Blind.

The Centre Jules-Léger (CJL) will maintain its partnership with the University of Ottawa to provide an online course for the Additional Qualification (AQ) - Teacher for the Blind Certification.

CJL will continue to work closely with the University of Ottawa to give access to its resources and staff of the AQ - Teacher for the Blind Certification, part 1. CJL will pursue discussion with University of Ottawa to be able to offer part 2.

Safe Schools and Bill 13

- The ministry will support effective implementation of Bill 13 (Accepting Schools Act).
- SEPPB will collaborate with the Learning Environment Branch to support the further implementation of the Safe Schools Strategy.
- The Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) 2012 places particular emphasis on leadership that supports diversity and equity, places a greater focus on supporting and working with parents as partners to close achievement gaps, and highlights the role of leaders in connecting the school to its wider environment and connecting families to a network of social services.

The implementation of the 2012 leadership framework will address mental health issues in the context of student achievement and well being.

Secondary Education

- In June 2011, the ministry requested expressions of interest by boards wishing to participate in pilots to track and record skills development of students in Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL), particularly those students engaged in non-credit activities.

Ten pilots will be funded in 2012-13 to continue looking at tracking progress and skills development of students outside the classroom. Some pilots will have a focus on tracking skills development of students with mental health/anxiety/behavioural issues.

Boards have submitted proposals for pilots to operate for 2012-13 school year. Findings from these pilots will be used to help in training of all boards at a Spring 2013 symposium.

- The document, Dual Credit Programs: Policy and Program Requirements, was released Fall 2012 and discussed in visits by Ministry staff to Regional Planning Teams (Winter 2012 and Spring 2013.)

An RFP will be released in November 2012 for program approvals for 2013-14.

- Funding will continue to be provided throughout 2012-13 school year to provide the required assistance for facilitating the participation of students with special education needs in cooperative education and dual credit programs.

Special Education Policy and Programs Branch

- The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) will continue to develop the Special Education In Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (working title) resource document and consult with key stakeholder groups when the draft becomes available.
- SEPPB offers ongoing support of the development a resource guide to support classroom teachers, ELL/ESL teachers and special education teachers.
- The Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students Who are Blind or Have Low Vision, are resources for district school boards to support students with these exceptionalities.

SEPPB will work with leadership networks and other stakeholders during the rollout of the guidelines (ongoing to 2012).

Once the guidelines are released, SEPPB will work with leadership networks and other stakeholders during the rollout.

- [Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Program Requirements \(2011\)](#), (OS 2011) which sets out the policies and programs, including diploma requirements, for all publicly funded elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, was released on December 1, 2011. The Student Achievement Division (SAD) will include relevant information in training sessions as appropriate.
- The revised Choices into Action is to be released in Spring 2013.

Release of new career education policy in spring 2012 for implementation in September 2013. Policies related to the 34 credit threshold come into effect in September 2013.

- Work will continue towards finalizing the provincial guidelines for school boards to assess, monitor and report on the achievement of students who do not access the Ontario curriculum and are exempted from all standardized provincial assessments. The guidelines will support school boards to enhance assessment practices and identify broader measures of success for students with special education needs.

The resources developed by lead school boards are being finalized and will be shared with all school boards in the 2012-13 school year.

- Students with special education needs are consistently not reaching the provincial standard on the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) provincial assessments. Although EQAO results indicate ongoing improvement, more work needs to be done to support learning for students with special education needs.

SEPPB will continue to partner with the Student Achievement Division and CAPB to develop a resource document for supporting English language learners (ELLs) with special education needs. SEEPB will continue to offer support of English language learners (ELLs) with special education needs.

- Students with special education needs may face barriers if they are not taken into account in the revision/updating of provincial policies governing secondary school programs and diploma requirements.

SEPPB will continue to work with the Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Policy Branch to ensure the implementation of elementary and secondary school policies for students with special education needs.

- Students with special education needs may face barriers that prevent them from fully participating in the Student Success/Learning to 18 initiatives.

Ongoing collaboration between SEPPB and Student Success/Learning to 18 Branch will work to ensure all Student Success/Learning to 18 initiatives continue to be designed and planned to support the diversity of all students in Ontario schools, including those with special education needs.

- The Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Implementation, Innovation and Support Branch will continue to collaborate and partner with Special Education to ensure that regional teams have Special Education members as part of the board visit teams.

Specialist High Skills Major

- For the 2012-13 academic year, there will be a total of over 1,500 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs in over 670 schools in all school boards. Over 150 new SHSM programs have been approved to be offered in 2012-13. School boards will be able to apply for SHSM programs for 2013-14 in November 2012.

A re-launch of the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) e-community share site will allow SHSM teachers across the province to share effective strategies and policy implementation.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for 2013-14 will be released in Nov 2013.

New SHSM programs for the 2013 – 14 school year will be approved in Spring 2013.

The ministry is committed to the integration of students with special needs in SHSM programs and the removal of barriers. The ministry will conduct more detailed analyses to determine participation and success of students with Individual Education Plan (IEP) in SHSM programs. Data to be used includes board level SHSM reports and OnSIS data.

A request has been made to the Educational Statistics and Analysis Branch (ESAB) to further disaggregate available OnSIS data regarding the exceptionality category for identified students. Further analysis of OnSIS data will be conducted to determine the types of courses and success in the SHSM of students with IEPs.

- SEPPB will continue to monitor the rate of participation of students with Individual Education Plans in the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program.

Web Based Teaching Tool

- The Web Based Teaching Tool (WBTT) is an early screening and intervention tool, for early identification of learning difficulties.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) will continue to work together with schools for the 2012-13 school year as the WBTT devolves and other resources are created to support students with learning disabilities.

Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Education will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify and remove barriers.

The OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General have developed a coordinated approach to continue with the review of government legislation for accessibility barriers. In this next phase, high impact statutes that meet the following criteria will be reviewed:

- a. Statutes that affect persons with disabilities directly;
- b. Statutes that provide for the delivery of widely applicable services or programs;
- c. Statutes that provide benefits or protections; or
- d. Statutes that affect a democratic or civic right or duty; and

This phase of the review will be completed by the end of 2014. The government has decided to review these statutes because it is anticipated that changes in these areas will have the highest impact on those Ontarians who have accessibility needs. We will continue to report on the review in our annual accessibility plan.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2012-13

The Ministry of Education is committed to ensuring that acts and regulations are reviewed for potential accessibility barriers.

- The ministry, through the Corporate Coordination Branch, had branches identify sections of Acts and any regulations the branch is responsible for in summer 2012 and identify a targeted completion date of review to ensure all acts are reviewed by 2015 and all regulations are reviewed by 2020.
- The Instruction and Leadership Development Division (ILDD) will continue to support the ministry's review of all legislation and regulations from an inclusion perspective.
- The ministry will continue to work with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) to ensure that any revisions made as part of their ongoing review of the act and

regulations reflect current and acceptable language related to people with disabilities.

Identifying, Removing and Preventing Barriers with the OPS Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) launched the OPS Inclusion Lens. The OPS Inclusion Lens is an analytical tool that helps staff incorporate elements of inclusion into their work through an enhanced understanding of diversity and accessibility. The OPS Inclusion Lens can be used when initiating a project or reviewing policies, programs, legislation, guidelines and procedures. The OPS Inclusion Lens can assist in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and other dimensions of diversity.

In April 2011, the Ministry of Education participated in training for multidisciplinary teams from all ministries on how to use the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Inclusion Lens to review laws and to remove accessibility barriers. Going forward, the OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General will be working together to support a coordinated approach to legislative review across the government.

This year, a number of regulations were reviewed for potential barriers to persons with disabilities using the Inclusion Lens by a multidisciplinary team, including the Legal Services Branch.

The Legal Services Branch reviewed new and existing acts, regulations, guidelines and standards and advised on whether the principles of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) are reflected.

- o Continuing Education (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 285)
- o Letters of Permission (O. Reg. 142/08)
- o New Teacher Induction Program (O. Reg. 266/06)
- o Operation of Schools – General (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298)
- o Principal and Vice-Principal Performance Appraisal (O. Reg. 234/10)
- o Principals and Vice-Principals – Redundancy and Reassignment (O. Reg. 90/98)
- o School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (O. Reg. 612/00)
- o Student Trustees (O. Reg. 7/07)
- o Supervisory Officers (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 309)
- o Teacher Learning Plans (O. Reg. 98/02)
- o Teacher Performance Appraisal (O. Reg. 99/02)

In the future, the ministry will:

- Remain committed to ensuring that its acts and regulations are reviewed for potential barriers.
- Continue to use the OPS Inclusion Lens to make policies, programs and legislation more accessible.
- Ensure the Legal Services Branch continues to provide advice with respect to the assessment of new and existing acts or regulations on whether they are compliant with the ODA, and consistent with the regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and will use the OPS Inclusion Lens to do so.

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

ABA – Applied Behaviour Analysis

AERO - Alternate Education Resources for Ontario

AIP – Autism Intervention Program

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

AQ Course – Additional Qualification Course

ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder

ASL – American Sign Language

BIPSA – Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement

BRÉO – Banque de ressources éducatives de l'Ontario

CAPB – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch

CESBA - Continuing Education School Board Administrators

CJL - Centre Jules-Léger

CODE – Council of Ontario Directors of Education

DMPP - Diversity Mentoring Partnership Program

ECD - Ernest C. Drury (ECD) School for the Deaf

EDU – Ministry of Education

EIE – Equality and Inclusive Education

ELD – Early Learning Division

ELL – English language learner

eLO – e-Learning Ontario

EQAO – Education Quality and Accountability Office

ESL – English as a Second Language

FDK – Full-Day Kindergarten

FLEPPB – French Language Education Policy and Programs Branch

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

IEP – Individual Education Plan

ILDD – Instruction and Leadership Development Division

LDAO – Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

LDB - Leadership Development Branch

LNS – Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

LSQ – Langue des signes québécoise

MASCE – Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education

MCSS – Ministry of Community and Social Services

MNS - Mass Notification System

OCEA - Ontario Cooperative Education Association

OCT – Ontario College of Teachers

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

OESC – Ontario Education Services Corporation

OHRC – Ontario Human Rights Commission

OLF – Ontario Leadership Framework

OnSIS – Ontario School Information System

OPS – Ontario Public Service

OS 2011 - *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Program Requirement, 2011*

OSP – Ontario Skills Passport

PPM 140 – Policy/Program Memorandum No. 140, Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

PSB – Provincial Schools Branch

RFP – Request for Proposal

SAD – Student Achievement Division

SAL - Supervised Alternative Learning

SCWI - School-College Work Initiative

SEPPB – Special Education Policy and Programs Branch

SHSM – Specialist High Skills Major

SWAC - School Within a College

WBTT – Web Based Teaching Tool

WCAG – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines from the World Wide Web Consortium

Web 2.0 – an umbrella concept encompassing a variety of technologies that facilitate collaboration and sharing on the web.

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Education's accessibility plan are always welcome.

Phone:

General inquiry number: 416-325-2929 or Toll-free 1-800-387-5514

General Toll-free inquiry TTY number: 1-800-263-2892

E-mail: info@edu.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

Visit the [Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario](#) web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

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